



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/025,668	12/18/2001	Stephen Griffin	1001.1535101	6574
28075	7590	05/06/2004	EXAMINER	
CROMPTON, SEAGER & TUFTE, LLC 1221 NICOLLET AVENUE SUITE 800 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55403-2420			FOREMAN, JONATHAN M	
		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
				3736

DATE MAILED: 05/06/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/025,668	GRIFFIN ET AL.
Examiner	Art Unit	
Jonathan ML Foreman	3736	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 March 2004.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-35 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-35 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ .

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ . 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 1/30/04 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1 – 4 and 20 – 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,944,701 to Dubrul.

In reference to claims 1 – 4 and 20 – 23, Dubrul discloses Applicant's claimed invention including an elongate core wire comprising a metal having an elastic limit; and a polymer jacket attached to and surrounding a distal portion of the core wire (Col. 3, lines 38 – 39; Col. 3, lines 62 – 64), the jacket comprising a shape memory polymer having an elastic limit, the polymer jacket being more stiff than the distal portion of the core wire which it surrounds such that if the tip is deformed into shape within the elastic limit of the metal and beyond the elastic limit of the polymer, the tip remains the shape (Col. 3, lines 35 – 39). Dubrul discloses the metal comprising a stainless steel, a super elastic metal and a nickel titanium alloy (Col. 2, lines 2 – 5).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,944,701 to Dubrul in view of WO 01/07499 to Gunatillake et al.

In reference to claim 17, Dubrul discloses providing a guidewire comprising an elongate core wire with a shape memory polymer jacket attached to and surrounding a portion of the core wire and maintaining the polymer jacket and the portion of the core wire which it surrounds into a desired shape (Col. 3, lines 35 – 39). However, Dubrul fails to disclose heating the polymer to a temperature at or above glass transition temperature of the shape memory polymer and cooling the polymer to a temperature below the glass transition temperature of the shape memory polymer to maintain the shape. Gunatillake et al. teaches deforming a shape memory polymer, heating a shape memory polymer to a temperature at or above glass transition temperature of the polymer and cooling the polymer to a temperature below the glass transition temperature of the polymer to maintain the deformed shape of the polymer (Page 1, lines 11 – 22). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art that in order to maintain the shape memory polymer jacket in the desired shape as disclosed by Dubrul, that one must deform the shape memory polymer, heat the shape memory polymer to a temperature at or above glass transition temperature of the polymer and cool the polymer to a temperature below the glass transition temperature of the polymer to maintain the desired deformed shape of the polymer (Page 1, lines 11 – 22).

6. Claims 17 - 19 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,944,701 to Dubrul in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,662,621 to Lafontaine

In reference to claims 17 – 19, Dubrul discloses providing a guidewire comprising an elongate core wire with a shape memory polymer jacket attached to and surrounding a portion of the core wire and maintaining the polymer jacket and the portion of the core wire which it surrounds into a desire shape (Col. 3, lines 35 – 39). However, Dubrul fails to disclose heating the polymer to a temperature at or above glass transition temperature of the shape memory polymer and cooling the polymer to a temperature below the glass transition temperature of the shape memory polymer to maintain the shape. Dubrul also fails to disclose reheating and cooling the jacket to form and maintain different shapes including the original shape. Lafontaine teaches providing an elongate core wire with a shape memory polymer jacket surrounding a portion of the core wire; deforming the polymer jacket and the core wire into a shape; heating the deformed polymer jacket to a temperature at or above the glass transition temperature of the shape memory polymer (Col. 5, lines 49 – 56); and cooling the deformed jacket to a temperature below the glass transition temperature of the shape memory polymer to maintain the shape (Col. 5, lines 56 – 59). Lafontaine discloses reheating and cooling the jacket to form and maintain different shapes including the original shape (Col. 7, lines 24 – 34). It would have been obvious to modify the method as disclosed by Dubrul to include the steps of deforming the polymer jacket, heating the polymer jacket above or at glass transition of the polymer, cooling the deformed jacket to a temperature below the glass transition temperature and to repeat the steps to form and maintain different shapes including the original shape as taught by Lafontaine in order to navigate the guidewire through the tortuous paths of the vascular system.

7. Claims 5 – 16 and 24 – 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,944,701 to Dubrul in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,485,458 to Takahashi.

In reference to claims 5 – 16 and 24 – 35, Dubrul discloses a shape memory polymer surrounding a portion of the core wire (Col. 3, lines 35 – 39), but fails to disclose the polymer being polyurethane, polynorbornene, polycaprolactone, polymethylmethacrylate, PLLA, PLLA OGA, PL/D LA, PMMA, polyethylene, polyisoprene, styrene-butadiene or photocrosslinkable polymer. However, Takahashi discloses a shape memory polymer surrounding a core wire wherein the polymer consists of poluorbornen, styrene-butadiene, polyurethane, polyisoprene, polyester, polyolefin, acrylic and styrene-acrylic (Col. 5, lines 56 – 67). Takahashi teaches that other shape-memory materials can be used in addition to those disclosed. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made use any shape memory polymer as taught by Takahashi in the device as disclosed by Dubrul in that Takahashi teaches that shape memory polymers are interchangeable. Additionally, the selection of a known material based upon its suitability for the intended use is a design consideration within the skill of the art. *In re Leshin*, 227 F.2d 197, 125 USPQ 416 (CCPA 1960). In the present case, replacing the shape memory polymer as disclosed by Lafontaine with any other shape memory polymer is a design consideration within the skill of the art.

Response to Arguments

8. Applicant's arguments with respect to the claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jonathan ML Foreman whose telephone number is (703) 305-5390. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday 8:00 am - 4:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mary Beth Jones can be reached on (703) 308-3400. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9306 for regular communications and (703) 872-9306 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0858.

JMLF

April 29, 2004

Mary Beth Jones
Acting SP2
AU 3736